



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Liz Krueger

Krueger Applauds Assembly Committee for Passage of Nation's Strongest Cell Phone Consumer Protections; Demands the Senate Stop Stalling on This Legislation

LIZ KRUEGER June 7, 2006

ALBANY, NY – Earlier today State Senator Liz Krueger praised the members of the Assembly Consumer Affairs and Protection Committee for passing the Cell Phone Consumer Protection Act (CPCPA – A.8539) bringing the legislation one step closer to a full Assembly vote. Krueger went on to demand that the leadership in the State Senate also take up the legislation.

"I only wish the leadership in the Republican-controlled State Senate felt as strongly about protecting New York consumers as lead sponsor Assemblymember Daniel O'Donnell and his committee colleagues do," Krueger said. "As usual, the State Senate is stalling on this legislation, and is protecting the interests of industry rather than the interests of New York consumers."

According to the New York State Consumer Protection Board, the cell-phone industry is the second most criticized in the state, and in 2004 and 2005 the Better Business Bureau reported more cell-phone related complaints than any other business.

Currently many consumers face a situation in which they sign up for advertised plans at advertised prices, only to find hidden fees that can double their monthly payments from

initial expectations. Also, many consumers find their service receives only sporadic coverage. These service problems can trap consumers in a situation where they are unable to find a better plan because of early-termination fees that are often quite expensive.

The CPCPA would provide New York cell phone users with the strongest consumer protection laws in the nation. This legislation requires cell phone companies to disclose all hidden fees, provide consumers with better coverage maps, and allows consumers to cancel their contract after their first bill, without financial penalty, if they wish to find a better plan with better service.

AARP has been strongly advocating for the bill's passage because of the tremendous growth in senior citizens purchasing cell-phones, and believes the new laws will make the industry more competitive and responsive to consumers.

Krueger concluded, "It is just common sense that customers who receive the best service will stay with the provider of that service. Therefore, companies providing great service should have no concerns about this legislation. However, no consumer should be forced to remain a customer for years at a time if they are unhappy with the service they are paying for."